

2023 FOREST RESILIENCE

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN



FINDING AND SUPPORTING THE ALIGNMENT BETWEEN FOREST
RESILIENCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE OBJECTIVES



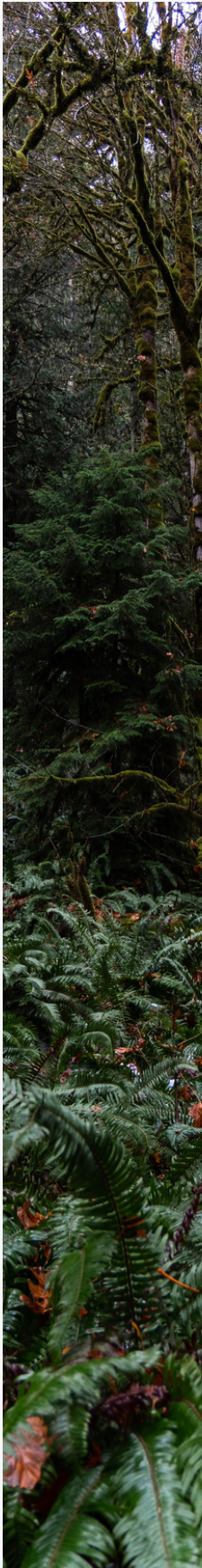
WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

THIS REPORT WOULD NOT EXIST WITHOUT THE INPUT FROM A WIDE VARIETY OF INDIVIDUALS. WE THANK YOU FOR SHARING YOUR WISDOM, LIVED EXPERIENCE, AND ADVICE TO HELP SHAPE THIS DOCUMENT:

- Annabelle Acosta, Fire Adapted Methow Valley
- Caprice Fasano, Quinault Div. of Natural Resources
- Carl Wilmsen, Carl Wilmsen Consulting
- Cindy Spiry, Snoqualmie Indian Tribe
- Cody Desautel, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation
- Dan Rankin, City of Darrington
- Dan Kipervaser, US Forest Service
- Dave Bingaman, Quinault Indian Nation
- Doug McCutcheon, San Juan County Land Bank
- Elise Rasmussen, formerly WA Department of Health
- Emily Jane Davis, Oregon State University
- Esther Min, University of Washington
- Ginger de los Angeles, Snoqualmie Indian Tribe
- Hannah Jones, Firelands WA
- Hilary Lundgren, WA Resource Conservation and Development Council
- Jaime Martin, Snoqualmie Indian Tribe
- Janene Ritchie, Pinchot Partners
- Jeffrey Thomas, Puyallup Tribe of Indians
- Jessica Farmer, Okanogan Long Term Recovery Group
- Jill Silver, 10,000 Years Institute
- Jill Wisheart, Department of Agriculture
- Jim Plampin, Quinault Indian Nation
- Jodi Bluhm, Samish Indian Nation
- Kai Hoffman-Krull, San Juan Islands Conservation District
- Kara Karboski, WA Resource Conservation and Development Council
- Kat Heim, Fire Adapted Methow Valley
- Kelly Guy, Squaxin Island Tribe
- Kevin James, US Forest Service
- Kirsten Cook, Zen Rock Consulting
- Laura Rivera, CAFÉ Wenatchee
- Lauren MacFarland, Quinault Indian Nation
- Leah Wood, Department of Health
- Leonard Forsman, Suquamish Tribe
- Lilliane Ballesteros, Latino Community Fund
- Lindsey Schromen-Wawrin, Firelands WA
- Manuel Machado III, Oregon State University
- Martha Valle Hernandez, Lomakatsi Restoration Project
- Megan Matthews, Office of Equity, Washington State
- Melodi Wynne, Spokane Tribal Network
- Michael Ross, Snoqualmie Indian Tribe
- Nancy Farr, Fire Adapted Methow Valley
- Nick Cusick, Pierce Conservation District
- Nick Kuntz, Skagit Conservation District
- Oak Rankin, Glacier Peak Institute
- Patrick Haggerty, Cascadia Conservation District
- Paul Ong, University of California, Los Angeles,
- Ray Entz, Kalispel Tribe of Indians
- Reese Lolley, WA Resource Conservation and Development Council
- Rebecca Hunt, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation
- Stevan Harrell, University of Washington
- Tia Beavert, Yakama Nation
- Tiana Luke, The Wilderness Society
- Todd Woodard, Samish Indian Nation
- Valerie Segrest, Tahoma Peak Solutions



WE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING DNR EMPLOYEES FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS:

- Aleksandar Dozic
- Alex Smith
- Allison Lu
- Allyn Cole
- Amy Ramsey
- Ana Barros
- Andrew Spaeth
- Andy Tate
- Annie Smith
- Ashley Blazina-Cooper
- Austin Hayes
- Ben Thompson
- Betsy Vandrush-Borgacz
- Bevin McLeod
- Brandon Schmidt
- Bret McNamara
- Brittany Poirson
- Carlos Lugo
- Chase Rother
- Chuck Hersey
- Clare Sobetski
- Corina Allen
- Courtney Higgins
- Dan Friesz
- Dan Omdal
- Daria Gosztyla
- Derek Churchill
- Dever Haffner-Ratliffe
- Drew Lyons
- EJ Juárez
- Em Roberts
- Emileo Guevara
- Garrett Meigs
- Glenn Kohler
- George Geissler
- Guy Gifford
- Holly Haley
- Isaac Davis
- Jacob Delbridge
- Jenny Coe
- Jen Watkins
- Jessica Walston
- Julia Kast
- Kate Williams
- Kathryn Minnema
- Kyle Lapham
- Marc Titus
- Marissa Aho
- Matthew Axe
- Matthew Provencher
- Max Showalter
- Mike Norris
- Pedro Belavenutti
- Rachel Brooks
- Raine Frost
- Raul Martinez
- Rochelle Goss
- Saboor Jawad
- Sean Tran
- Stefan Petrovic
- Steve Harris
- Sydney Debien
- Terra Rentz
- Tim Stapleton
- Tom Frantz
- Tracy Petroske
- Trevor McConchie
- Will Rubin
- Zach Mellema

SPECIAL THANKS TO ASHLEY BLAZINA-COOPER, KYLE LAPHAM, TREVOR MCCONCHIE, GARRETT MEIGS, MATT PROVENCHER, AND BEN THOMPSON FOR THEIR EFFORTS AS THE FOREST RESILIENCE DIVISION ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE WORKGROUP, WHICH SPEARHEADED THE CREATION, COLLABORATION, AND FACILITATION OF THE GOALS AND ACTIONS IN THIS PLAN.

PHOTOS ON FRONT, CLOCKWISE FROM SIDE LEFT (PHOTO CREDITS AS PARENTHETICALS FOLLOWING CAPTION): PARTICIPANTS IN THE PRESCRIBED FIRE TRAINING EXCHANGE (TREX) WITH THE KALISPEL TRIBE MANAGE THE BURN LINE (KARA KARBOSKI); GOV. INSLEE WITH MEMBERS OF THE WA ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE TASK FORCE AT THE SIGNING OF THE HEAL ACT IN THE DUWAMISH TRIBE'S LONGHOUSE AND CULTURAL CENTER (COURTESY ELISE RASMUSSEN); THE TILlicum THINNING CREW RESPONSIBLE FOR THINNING 4,000 ACRES ON THE OKANOGAN-WENATCHEE NATIONAL FOREST IN THE TILlicum PRIORITY LANDSCAPE (JOHN MARSHALL); AERIAL PHOTO OF THE RAINWATER WILDLIFE AREA, OWNED AND STEWARDED BY THE CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF THE UMATILLA INDIAN RESERVATION (JOHN MARSHALL).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION 1

Defining Environmental Justice

- Introduction5
- Environmental Justice and Forest Resilience: Relationship to Mission Statement.....10
- Brief History of Environmental Justice12
- Healthy Environments for All (HEAL) Act16

SECTION 2

Forest Resilience Environmental Justice Implementation Plan Development Process

- Implementation Plan: Amending Forest Resilience Strategic Work19
- Preparation: External Engagement, Coordination, and Collaboration 20
- Preparation: Internal Engagement 22

SECTION 3

Overarching Goals, Current Work, Future Targets

- GOAL 1: Increase and Enhance Tribal Partnerships to Achieve Forest Resilience Goals 26
- GOAL 2: Develop, Strengthen and Expand Partnerships and Resources for groups and demographics Historically Underserved by our Programs 29
- GOAL 3: Make Forest Resilience Communication Materials More Accessible to a Wider Number of Washingtonians 33
- GOAL 4: More Equitably Partner With and Support Communities in Forest Resilience Planning and Implementation Efforts 35
- GOAL 5: Review and Identify Opportunities to Improve Internal Policies, Contracting, Education, and Training Requirements to Better Prioritize Equitable Implementation Practices 37

References and Citations 40

SECTION 1: DEFINING ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

INTRODUCTION



Photo by Joshua Wilson.

“HISTORY WORKS ITSELF OUT IN THE LIVING.”

Louise Erdrich, a member of the Turtle Mountain Band of the Chippewa Indians (a tribe of the Ojibwe people) and renowned novelist, first wrote the above statement in her book, *The Plague of Doves*, using it to summarize how historic injustices continue to shape the lives of individuals, families, communities, and tribes.

Holistic consideration of how our collective histories impact our forests and their management today is needed in

order to best implement and integrate environmental justice and equity into our state’s forest health and resilience work. What past political injustices shaped our landscapes must be given as much consideration as past management practices, current stewardship efforts, the historic relationships between peoples and forests, and the forced disunion of many of those same peoples and forests over time.

This implementation plan is the first attempt by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources to discern the key intersections and alignments between environmental justice and forest resilience in Washington state. In this initial work, we found we needed to focus more on listening, relationship-building, supporting, and partnering with tribal nations and Indigenous individuals, Latinx forest workers and their families/communities, as well as communities in and around both rural and urban forests.

We also realized that, in order to be better partners, we needed to take time to focus inward. We took steps to educate ourselves on issues related to treaties, workers' rights, critical race theory, and community-led, community-centered initiatives.

This has helped us better understand

which of our internal policies and ways of doing business need to be tweaked, re-worked or completely overhauled.

Washington's Native populations (both past and present) hold unique and special relationships with our forests that cannot continue to be overlooked or diminished. The systems, balances, and resiliencies in many of Washington's ecosystems have evolved under Indigenous stewardship since time immemorial – some may not exist today if not for the long-term stewardship performed by Indigenous people.

Long-running challenges relating to workers' rights and unsafe working conditions continue to impact many Latinx forest workers. These individuals increasingly make up much of the labor-intensive forest workforce, yet face unequal pay, inadequate access to healthcare services, and not enough career-track opportunities.

Photo of the 2022 Prescribed Fire Training Exchange (Trex) with the Kalispel Tribe. Photo by Jarrett Cook.



The legacies of past forest politics, management practices, and economic priorities greatly impact our rural forested communities to this day. Communities centered around or within our forests are not always included in management decisions, and thus may not benefit from decisions affecting their roads, views, and access points to forestlands. Inequitable access to things like high-speed internet, educational and health facilities, and economic opportunities often exacerbate these imbalances.

States lived in urban cities. Many city-dwelling Indigenous individuals lack access or rights to cultural sites, materials, foods, and treaty rights.

As a state agency, we also acknowledge that past actions by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) matter when considering our current and future activities. Support, implementation, and enforcement of inequitable natural resource policies and programs by DNR is not something we cannot overlook as we develop our



Forest worker implementing fuels reduction in the Tillicum Project Creek Watershed Restoration Project on the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest, 2022. Photo by John Marshall.

Similarly, urban communities can face large environmental inequities related to tree cover, exposure to pollutants, and access to urban forestry programs. Native Americans living in urban areas represent a large, often overlooked population in our state – as of the 2000 census, approximately sixty-four percent of the Indigenous population in the United

processes for collaboration on new programs, drafting of new legislative proposals, and making tough budget choices. We must acknowledge past trauma, distrust, and miscommunication; then we must repair and rebuild existing relationships, while initiating new ones.



This implementation plan acts both as an amendment to our [2020 Washington Forest Action Plan](#) and a guide for the 10 programs that make up DNR's [Forest Resilience Division](#). Each program works with internal groups and external partners to implement the Forest Action Plan. While this initial implementation plan is its own standalone document, we intend to thread these equity-centered actions and goals into future iterations of the Forest Action Plan, starting in 2025 – the next planned update to the Forest Action Plan.

This implementation plan also acts as a complement to DNR's agency-wide [Strategic Action Plan](#), updated in December 2022 to include additional actions and goals centered on environmental justice and equity, as part of the requirements outlined in Senate Bill 5141, known as the Healthy Environments for All (or HEAL) Act. In 2021, the Washington State Legislature passed several laws directing DNR and other state

threats to our forests at a meaningful scale, prioritizes landscapes on which to focus investments, and aims to keep the Evergreen State true to its name. In short, it is a significant agency planning document that we believe requires an environmental justice implementation plan for our agency.

The Forest Action Plan is also a roadmap for implementing Washington's Shared Stewardship Investment Strategy and further aligning strategies in priority landscapes with partners at the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service (USFS), Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW), and a host of shared stewardship partner organizations. This implementation plan will not only guide the Forest Resilience Division programs that implement the Forest Action Plan goals and strategies, but we will also use it to integrate environmental justice into shared stewardship work with partners.

“JUSTICE MUST BE WON BY CONFRONTING THE WORLD AS-IS.”

PROFESSOR PAUL ONG, DIRECTOR OF THE CENTER FOR NEIGHBORHOOD KNOWLEDGE, LUSKIN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES.

agencies to address and consider environmental justice within the context of our existing work – most notably through the HEAL Act. The HEAL Act requires that state agencies incorporate environmental justice into agency strategic plans and suggests they incorporate environmental justice implementation plans into other significant agency planning documents.

The U.S. Congress requires each state to have a Forest Action Plan. Washington's 2020 Forest Action Plan sets out strategic goals and actions to address pressing

We acknowledge that this work will take many years and is truly never-ending. We will continue to sew environmental justice into the tapestry of our agency and our shared stewardship work to implement our Forest Action Plan. This remains a living, breathing plan that will continue to evolve. We know there are many pieces that are missing. Along the journey, we will likely make mistakes. We will learn a lot.

This is only the start.





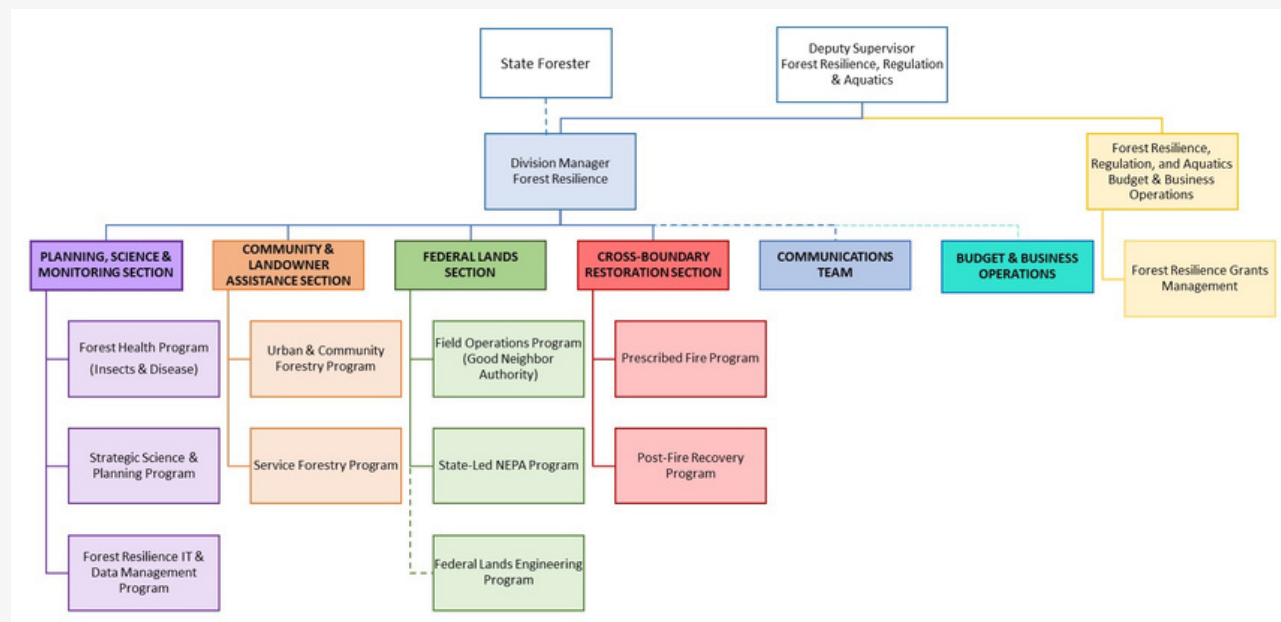
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AND FOREST RESILIENCE: RELATIONSHIP TO MISSION STATEMENT

DNR’s mission is to manage, sustain, and protect the health and productivity of Washington’s lands and waters to meet the needs of present and future generations.

In support of this mission, the Forest Resilience Division is responsible for the assessment, planning, coordinated implementation, and monitoring of forest health-related activities across all-lands that work to restore and sustain ecological functions of Washington’s forested landscapes and support healthy and resilient communities. Our work is delivered across four sections that represent 10 program areas delivered with regional support statewide.

The Forest Resilience Division works to deliver on our mission to increase the health and resilience of our forests and local communities by working across all

lands and in the interests of all Washingtonians. This document acts as our first attempt to formally amend our Forest Resilience Division strategies, goals, and actions to more critically meet shared forest health interests and reduce environmental injustices impacting current and future people and forests of Washington. Additional goals and strategies central to our partners’ missions to pursue our all lands, all-hands approach to forest resilience from an equity-centered mindset will be included as amendments in the 2025 edition of the Washington Forest Action Plan.



Org Chart of the Forest Resilience Division sections and associated programs.

“We can't save the planet without uplifting the voices of its people, especially those most often unheard.”

**LEAH THOMAS, AUTHOR OF THE
INTERSECTIONAL ENVIRONMENTALIST:
HOW TO DISMANTLE SYSTEMS OF
OPPRESSION TO PROTECT PEOPLE +
PLANET**



EQUALITY



EQUITY



JUSTICE

Where an “equality” approach often means providing all individuals with the same resources, equity recognizes that each person comes from different circumstances, and as such, needs different types and amounts of resources and opportunities in order to achieve a more equal outcome. We are here to serve the interests of all Washingtonians. In order to do so, the Forest Resilience Division needed (and will continue) to document these differences through active listening, conversations, and meetings.

The visual to the left depicts a scenario where resources are provided equally, equitably, and justly for an end goal. In this case, equality offers everyone the same resources (top graphic)—the same size box — to gain a better view of the mountains and lake. An equity lens (center graphic) examines the individual’s specific needs and starting point, and provides the right mix of resources to meet those needs. In this case, a taller box is provided to the human in the middle, and a ramp is provided to the human on the right. Justice works to adjust the system as a whole to provide more adequate and holistic access (bottom graphic). In this case, the fence is taken down completely, negating the need for anyone to need additional resources to enjoy the views.

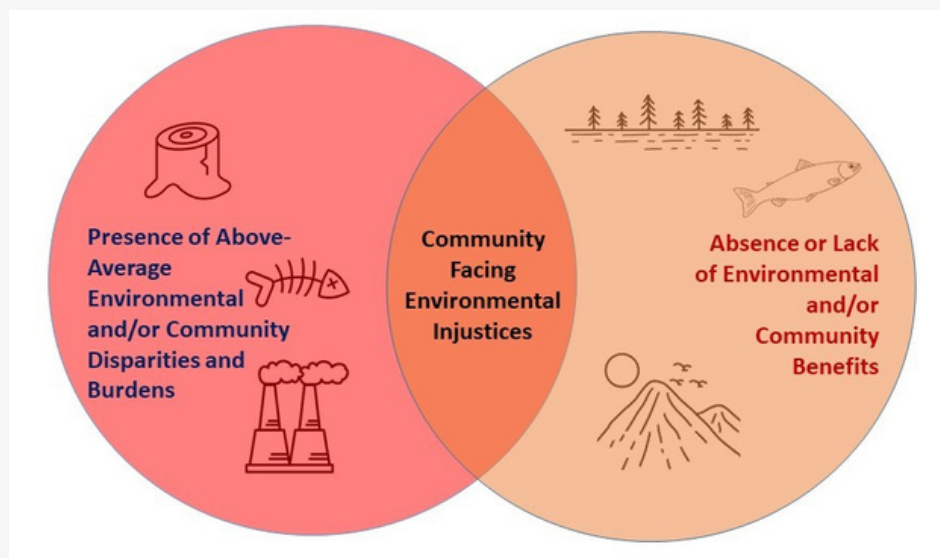
Equality, equity, and justice in terms of access to mountain and lake vistas. Graphic elements by Vecteezy.

BRIEF HISTORY OF ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Environmental justice, as defined in the HEAL Act, means “the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, rules, and policies. Environmental justice includes addressing disproportionate environmental and health impacts in all laws, rules, and policies with environmental impacts by prioritizing vulnerable populations and overburdened communities, the equitable distribution of resources and benefits, and eliminating harm.” (HEAL Act, 2021).

receive the fewest benefits of environmental decisions, policies, and regulations, but most often carry the burdens of those choices.

For example, the reservation system often left Indigenous communities with only portions of their traditional territories — often the sections considered ‘undesirable’ by white settlers. In the 1950s, the Bureau of Indian Affairs started the Voluntary Relocation Project, which promised Indigenous individuals assistance finding jobs and housing for them and their families if they moved to a metropolitan area. The so-called

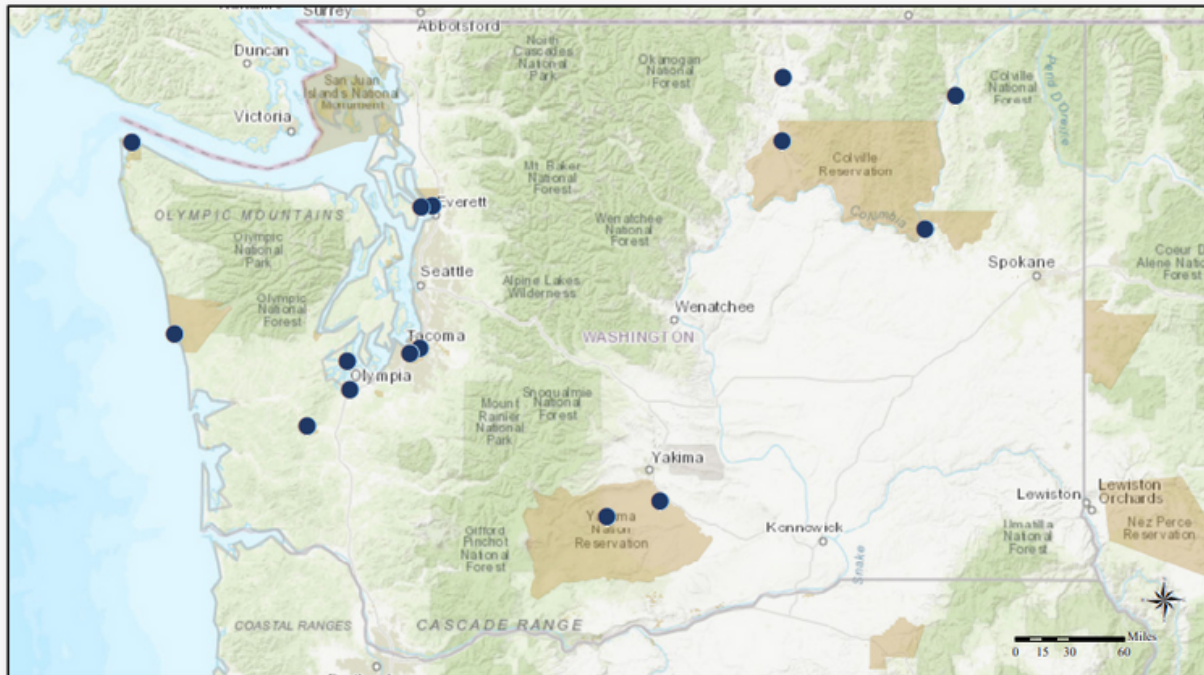


Venn diagram of a community facing environmental injustices. Most environmental justice efforts are focused around individuals, groups, and communities where the benefits of environmental decisions are absent, but the burdens or disparities are heavily weighted toward or present within the community. Graphic elements by Vecteezy.

Environmental injustices have occurred in the United States (including in Washington state) for centuries. As a topic, environmental justice centers around this fact: communities that have high populations of people of color, and/or who have fewer socioeconomic resources, are statistically more likely to live, work, learn, and play in the United States’ most polluted environments (US Commission on Civil Rights, 2003) Similarly, these communities often

assistance often amounted to one-way train tickets and a few hundred dollars. Indigenous individuals lost cultural, spiritual, and physical connections to their homelands, while often battling discrimination at their new schools and places of work.

Before the Voluntary Relocation Project, approximately 8 percent of the Indigenous people in the U.S. lived in urban areas. Today, about two-thirds of all Indigenous Americans live in urban areas.



Map of the 15 identified locations of federal Indian boarding schools that historically ran in Washington state. Map courtesy the US Department of the Interior Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative.

Both the Seattle and Portland, Oregon regions rank among the top metropolitan areas for urban Indigenous populations (Statista, 2023). Indian boarding schools, which ran from 1819 to 1969, took thousands of Indigenous children from their homes and communities (Waxman, 2022). These children were often punished for practicing any of their cultural or spiritual traditions, and entered into adulthood often having faced years of abuse at these schools, as well as devoid of their Indigenous identity. Many Indigenous communities continue to face disproportionate levels of discrimination. Examples include siting waste sites and emission-heavy industrial operations, or short-term projects with long-term environmental impacts on or near their lands.

Many communities with fewer socioeconomic resources and more people of color bear the burdens of pollution (Moore-Nall, 2015; Palmer, 2022),

while populations further away often claim only the benefits (such as electricity, energy, waste removal) of these sites.

Climate change projections demonstrate that many of these communities will continue to face larger, more exacerbated effects related to environmental health. These environmental injustices affect both urban and rural communities by increasing air, water, land, and even noise pollutants, creating unsafe conditions for community members to live, work, and play in.

Communities have protested these environmental injustices for decades, but many of these protests didn't gain national attention until civil rights (and the civil rights movement) came to the cultural forefront. For example, Cesar Chavez-led efforts demanding workplace rights and safety changes for Latino farm

workers in the 1960s also included demands for better protection against pesticides used in agricultural settings (Bernstein, 2023).

In Washington, the 1974 Boldt Decision secured for treaty tribes the right to 50 percent of all fish harvest that passes

through recognized fishing grounds. The decision also made 19 tribes co-managers of Washington's fisheries (Dougherty, 2020). However, Indigenous people continue to be struck with a lack of access to traditional and ceded territories used for hunting, harvesting, educational and spiritual purposes.



Map of Native American Treaty Ceded Areas as well as current reservations (gray). Please note that many current reservations have been reduced or removed over time since original treaties. The Nisqually Indian Tribe, for example, lost 71% of its reservation lands when Pierce County condemned and transferred these acres to the United States Army (Nisqually Indian Tribe, 2018). Map courtesy Washington Dept. of Ecology.



Robert Bullard is considered by many to be the father of the modern environmental justice movement. Bullard, an environmental sociologist, was first inspired to do environmental justice work when his wife, attorney Linda McKeever Bullard, suggested he look at the spatial locations of all solid waste facilities in Houston, Texas.

McKeever Bullard represented Margaret Bean and other community members of the Northwood Manor neighborhood in the 1979 *Bean v. Southwestern Waste Management* lawsuit. Robert Bullard found that, despite African Americans accounting for only 25 percent of the city's population, predominantly African American neighborhoods were chosen for three of the city's four landfills, six of the eight city-owned garbage incinerators, and all five of the city-owned garbage dumps (Buckley, 2022).

Bullard expanded his work into other parts of Texas, as well as Alabama and West Virginia. Bullard published *Dumping in Dixie* in 1990. The book is considered the first that holistically examines the widening gaps between racial and socioeconomic groups pertaining to environmental disparities – a gap that in many places continues to grow.

At the national level, Executive Order 12898, "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations," (Environmental Protection Agency, 2022) was signed on February 11, 1994. This executive order was the first at the federal level to mandate all agencies to "make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations."

However, while many federal agencies have written environmental justice-centered action item documents, the dial on progress has continued to be slow.



Members of the Washington State Environmental Justice Task Force with Governor Jay Inslee at the 2021 signing of the HEAL Act at the Duwamish Longhouse and Cultural Center. Photo courtesy Elise Rasmussen.

HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS FOR ALL (HEAL) ACT

Senate Bill 5141, known as the Healthy Environments for All (HEAL) Act, passed the Washington State Legislature in 2021. The HEAL Act centers on reducing environmental disparities by implementing a series of recommendations developed by the Washington State Environmental Justice Task Force.

The HEAL Act names six state agencies: DNR, the Washington State Department of Agriculture, Washington State Department of Health, Washington State Department of Ecology, Washington State Department of Transportation, and Washington State Department of Commerce – as well as the Puget Sound Partnership – to comply with specific environmental justice requirements.

These include:

- Creating and adopting an agency-wide community engagement plan by July 1, 2022 that outlines specific actions to prioritize engagement with historically underserved Washington communities and individuals;
- Amending the agency's strategic plans to include an environmental justice implementation plan by January 1, 2023;
- Developing an environmental justice assessment framework that must be used for any significant agency action by July 1, 2023
- Incorporating environmental justice principles into budget decisions by July 1, 2023 that prioritizes expenditures that benefit underserved communities and individuals.

The HEAL Act also included the creation of the statewide Environmental Justice Council. Made up of 16 members representing the interests of youth, tribal communities, people of color, as well as environmental justice experts, the council provides recommendations

and guidance on how agencies can best implement HEAL Act requirements. The council also provides guidance on best practices for identifying overburdened communities, as well as preferred methods for tracking progress on environmental justice-related work.



Composite of the logos for all of the named agencies held to comply with the 2021 HEAL Act.

SECTION 2: FOREST RESILIENCE EJ IMPLEMENTATION PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

This section outlines the conversations, work groups, and committee input that informed this document. In some instances, we directly solicited this input from targeted stakeholders representing specific viewpoints and lived experiences. Additional input came from other meetings, groups, and conversations that included DNR staff.

We readily acknowledge that the amount and diversity of these conversations and meetings is not complete. We have only touched the tip of the iceberg in terms of where and what inequities and injustices we must address, reduce, and alleviate in our work as a division.





Title pages for the 20-Year Forest Health Strategic Plan, the 2020 Forest Action Plan, and DNR's Plan for Climate Resilience, and the DNR Strategic Plan: 2022 – 2025.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN: AMENDING FOREST RESILIENCE STRATEGIC WORK

This implementation plan is an initial guide to help equitably align the strategic work of the Forest Resilience Division. This includes the goals, priorities, and actions of the 20-Year Forest Health Strategic Plan: Eastern Washington, Washington's 2020 Forest Action Plan, and portions of DNR's Climate Resilience Plan.

This implementation plan acts as a formal amendment to our Forest Action Plan; as such, we will add future iterations of our environmental justice goals and actions to the Forest Action Plan, starting with the next update slated for 2025. This plan also acts as a complement to DNR's agency-wide Strategic Action Plan: 2022-2025, which DNR amended in December 2022 to include overall environmental justice-focused actions and goals for the agency. These actions and goals center on a variety of sub-topics, including (but not limited to): focused efforts to build

diversity, equity and inclusion into DNR's workplace culture; embedding environmental justice into DNR operations and management; diversifying DNR's boards and commissions; updating DNR's formal tribal consultation policy; and a commitment to transparency and accessibility in DNR's work, publications, and resources.

This plan's goals and objectives have been drafted to comport with the goals, priorities, and focus areas for the plans named above. By doing so, we hope that this document, and its future iterations, will lead to comprehensive inclusion of environmental justice into all target actions and accomplishments of our division.

PREPARATION: EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT, COORDINATION, AND COLLABORATION

Listening is a key component of environmental justice work. To know what types of resources are needed, and what challenges most need supporting, one must first listen. Hearing from the communities most affected by forest health-related environmental inequities was a necessary first step for us to make the right changes so that the Forest Resilience Division better serves all Washingtonians.

Below is a brief summary of discussions, meetings, and work with external stakeholders and partners that informed the development of this planning document.

- Forest Resilience Division staff began to meet with tribal members and staff across the state to have introductory conversations on how to better support each tribal nation's forest health goals. Given the different histories, geographies, and sizes of each Indigenous nation, forest health goals ranged widely, and included everything from support for forest health treatments and better protections and support of sacred spaces, to traditional territory access concerns, to messaging and communication in public-facing forested areas. Some of these concerns are outside of our division's purview – as such, these were shared with other DNR staff, external agencies and additional partners to help propel potential collaborations and solutions forward.
- Meetings and conversations with organizations that work with Spanish-speaking communities, including Latino forest workers and their families, to identify current health, cultural, and social needs related to forest health, as well as potential opportunities, and planned future collaborations and partnerships.
- Conversations with rural community members to outline current forest health challenges, including localized economic and recreation opportunities, and to deepen our division's awareness of technical and logistical issues that exacerbate current challenges.
- Invited and compensated speakers who were experts on Indigenous stewardship, wellness, and management, Latino forest worker health and safety, environmental justice, and forest resilience and equity to share their thoughts in a "What Makes a Just Forest?" speaker series. The five-part virtual series ran from mid-May to early June 2022 and was free and open to the public. *Please see sidebar for more information.*
- Forest Resilience staff are part of an interagency group focused on identifying and remediating funding mechanisms in support of more inclusive community engagement in advisory groups, work groups, and other similar state-level committees. Made up of representatives from more than 20 state agencies, the group meets monthly to discuss creative solutions to compensation, pathways to more equitable compensation, and potential avenues for future support.

Forest Resilience staff are also part of an interagency listening session work group. Currently in development and led by representatives from the departments of health and agriculture, the group was developed to better streamline interagency efforts to gather input from underserved

individuals and communities in a collective fashion. By putting the onus of coordination, logistics, and facilitation on the state agencies, we hope to minimize the time and resource requirements of those sharing their lived experience with environmental injustice.

WHAT MAKES A JUST FOREST? SPEAKERS' SERIES

The Forest Resilience Division recently hosted a speaker series centered around examining the ways environmental justice intertwines with forest health. The series name came from an internal conversation, where DNR Director of Equity and Environmental Justice EJ Juárez asked rhetorically, “what makes a just forest?” This series hoped to start answering that question.

Held virtually on select Tuesdays and Thursdays in May and June 2022, the series welcomed experts from across the Pacific Northwest and California to share their experience and expertise on topics ranging from the history of environmental justice, tribal stewardship, Latinx forest worker health and safety, First Foods and Medicines, and land resilience. Speaker events included presentations from one to three experts, followed by a question-and-answer session with the audience. All events in the series were recorded and are available to watch at: bit.ly/3HENlh9.

We thank all the amazing speakers for sharing their wisdom, lived experience, and knowledge in this series: Professor Paul Ong, Director of the Center for Neighborhood Knowledge, Luskin School of Public Affairs, University of California, Los Angeles; Elise Rasmussen, former Washington State Environmental Justice Task Force Project Manager; Jeff Thomas, Timber, Fish, and Wildlife Director for the Puyallup Tribe; Dr. Melodi Wynne, Traditional Food Specialist, Indigenous Birth Justice & Community Psychologist for the Spokane Tribal Network; Leah Wood, Equity and Environmental Justice Consultant for the Washington State Department of Health; Martha Valle Hernandez, Promotora with Lomakatsi Restoration Project; Valerie Segrest, Nutritionist and Food Sovereignty Expert and Co-Founder of Tahoma Peak Solutions; Carl Wilmsen, former director of the Northwest Forest Worker Center; Stevan Harrell, Professor Emeritus in the School of Environmental and Forest Sciences and Department of Anthropology at the University of Washington; Leonard Forsman, Tribal Chairman of the Suquamish Tribe.



Photos of the speakers from the “What Makes a Just Forest?” Speaker Series.

PREPARATION: INTERNAL ENGAGEMENT

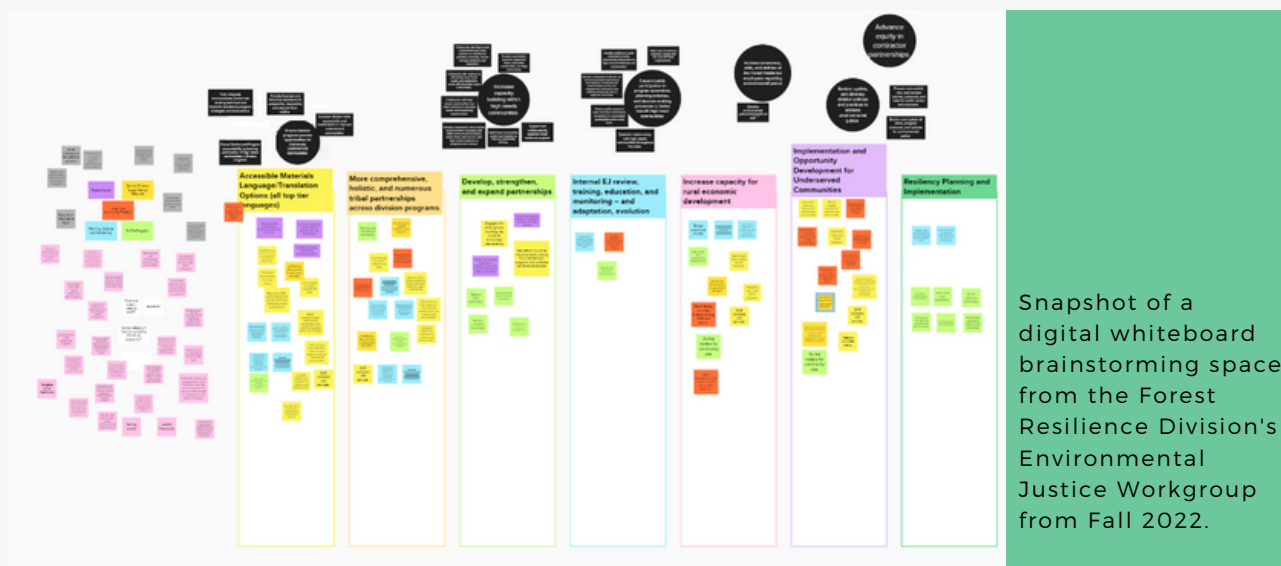
In order to effectively implement all the information, discussions, and feedback from our external partners, we needed to internally coordinate our work within our division and DNR. The Forest Resilience Division's 10 programs represent a diverse workforce, and thus a pressing need for more comprehensive and regular internal coordination.

While many Forest Resilience Division staff have been actively working to integrate equity into their own work, efforts to integrate environmental justice across the entire division truly began with the formation of the division's Environmental Justice Workgroup in 2022.

lack of capacity or funding, undeveloped partnerships or relationships, and lack of understanding of root causes for inequities or project failures.

These findings were added to challenges and opportunities outlined by external partners in conversations, workshops, and webinars (summarized in the External Engagement section above).

The workgroup then determined environmental justice challenge categories. Many workgroup members found they faced similar challenges, yet some were specific to a single program or section. Once categories were finalized,



Members initially worked independently, surveying their program and section colleagues to identify current areas of work, current projects and partners, and locations of geographic focus. Workgroup members also surveyed colleagues about current, past, or potential partnerships, projects, or programs that were either partially focused on environmental justice issues or could be adjusted to be centered more on equity. Challenges with meeting environmental justice aims and goals for each was also outlined, and often included

workgroup members facilitated brainstorming sessions with section colleagues about potential actions and roles that division staff could undertake to address environmental justice issues. These actions were then reviewed and refined by the workgroup over several meetings, until five goals and 56 actions were agreed upon. Final input on these goals and actions was provided by Division management and members of DNR's Executive team.



FOREST HEALTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE'S ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE WORKGROUP

In February 2022, we began working with our Forest Health Advisory Committee (FHAC) to:

- define a shared understanding of the linkages between forest resilience and environmental justice
- identify opportunities for our agency's programmatic work with respect to environmental justice consideration
- define considerations to inform Forest Resilience Division investments from the Wildfire Response, Forest Restoration, and Community Resilience account.

The committee established a workgroup with the intent to engage FHAC members and partners in the development of recommendations for review, editing, and approval by the full committee. The workgroup membership included Tia Beavert (Yakama Nation Tribal Forestry), Tiana Luke (The Wilderness Society), Janene Ritchie (Pinchot Partners), Laura Rivera (Community for the Advancement of Family Education, CAFE), Nick Kunz (Skagit Conservation District), Ashley Blazina-Cooper (DNR Staff Lead), and Raúl Martínez (DNR). In June 2022, the workgroup presented the FHAC with its findings and recommendations, which were considered at length by the membership and discussed at the September 2022 FHAC meeting. A subsequent request for applied examples to better illustrate how these recommendations and findings might be applied was made, and extensive follow-up discussion, with additional support from Forest Resilience Division staff, occurred during the two subsequent FHAC meetings.

On May 16, 2023, the FHAC passed a unanimous motion to endorse the following recommendations as broad guiding principles they relate to the integration of Environmental Justice and Equity into the delivery of forest health funding, particularly as they relate to investments from the Wildfire Response, Forest Restoration and Community Resilience account:

1. The FHAC recommends that decisions made regarding investments for Forest Restoration activities through the Wildfire Response, Forest Restoration, and Community Resilience account should include thorough and holistic consultation to the greatest extent possible and commensurate with anticipated impact both within and outside the geography to build on existing efforts in DNR.
2. The FHAC recognizes that geospatial data sources and assessment frameworks can be important tools to inform forest health prioritization and monitoring work. The FHAC also recognized that there can be disparities and data gaps in the geospatial datasets and assessment framework that may lead to interpretation bias. Therefore, the FHAC recommends that DNR acknowledge that data can be imbued and influenced with disparities and data gaps through its creation, distribution, and access.
3. The FHAC's Environmental Justice Workgroup could not identify an environmental justice assessment developed specifically for natural resources, forestry, or a similar topic. Until DNR has developed an environmental justice assessment as part of the requirements of ESSB 5141 (the HEAL Act), the FHAC does not recommend using other environmental justice assessment tools as a standalone identifier for environmental injustices in forest health.

Additional internal work that shaped the development of this plan for the Forest Resilience Division included:

- Division staff co-facilitated the agency-wide internal steering committee for community engagement. As part of the HEAL Act mandates, DNR facilitated an external steering committee to develop our agency's Community Engagement Guide. The internal steering committee functioned as the complement to these external committee efforts, taking in the feedback and guidance provided by the external committee members to define how, who, and what we needed to meet these community engagement needs. The internal committee met regularly to discuss engagement needs and demands from the external committee. In meetings, DNR staff group members identified the best programs, regions, and divisions to meet these demands, and outlined additional resources needed to facilitate action toward these demands.
- Forest Resilience was part of the agency-wide Pro-Equity Anti-Racism (PEAR) work group, which outlined current work and efforts in each division around equity and inclusion. Results from this group informed recommendations for the 2023-2025 PEAR Plan.
- Forest Resilience staff met with other division staff spearheading environmental justice projects and efforts to coordinate work and agency-wide resources on an as-needed basis.



Photo by David Lindahl.

SECTION 3: OVERARCHING GOALS, CURRENT WORK, FUTURE TARGETS

The Forest Resilience Division developed these environmental justice goals and associated actions through the Forest Resilience Division's Environmental Justice Workgroup. Made up of members from all four sections of the division (Federal Lands, Cross-Boundary Restoration, Community and Landowner Assistance, and Strategic Planning, Science, and Monitoring), the workgroup met regularly from Summer 2022 to Spring 2023 to define current work, review stakeholder feedback, and identify actions and goals to help meet these concerns and needs.

Our review indicated that many individual projects and programs already do integrate considerations of equity and environmental justice, but that all programs would benefit from deliberate planning from an equity lens. We came to an agreement as a division that we need to focus more division capacity and support toward (and with) tribal nations and Indigenous individuals, Latinx forest workers and their communities, and rural forest communities. We agreed that our work, both in urban and rural environments, needs to be more accessible on a variety of fronts, and must be informed by the cultural, physical, and lingual needs of populations we work to better serve.

In this plan, we identified specific Environmental Justice and Equity actions and goals to implement across Forest Resilience programs for the following reasons:

- 1. Verified and Important.** Goals and actions are grounded in the conversations, meetings, and presentations we had with individuals whose voices are often the least heard when discussing forest resilience. The actions in this plan attempt to make meaningful progress on addressing these identified challenges and integrating environmental justice into our bold, statewide forest health goals.
- 2. Current and future capacity.** The magnitude of these goals is reflective of the division's current near-term capacity and resources. Capacity limitations required us to align this implementation with our reality. In 2025, when we revise our Forest Action Plan with engagement from across our agency and external shared stewardship partners, this expanded collective capacity will likely expand our scope.
- 3. Expertise.** While assessing the many areas of environmental injustice that are connected to forest resilience, we found that many concerns, challenges, and injustices were beyond our division's areas of expertise, scope, and authority. As such, we place focus in this plan on work that our programs and staff can implement using our expertise and commit to connecting with others with expertise and resources for environmental justice topic areas we are not equipped to lead on.
- 4. Measurable.** In order to better assure progress, we chose to define our actions in ways where progress can be tracked. While some of these actions require quantitative metrics, others require us to develop new qualitative ways to track progress. We also found that pilot projects and partnerships are necessary to determine the best metrics.

GOAL 1: Increase and Enhance Tribal Partnerships to Achieve Forest Resilience Goals

Indigenous people have been stewards of our forests and associated environments in Washington since time immemorial. While we currently work with several tribal partners, we wish to expand and increase these partnerships to include a wider array of Indigenous partners, including Washington's urban Indigenous population. Respect and recognition of their wisdom, expertise, and traditional knowledge should inform state resource management and investments. Indigenous people and tribal nation voices, concerns, and perspectives are valuable in all forest health related endeavors.



Staff member from the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation weaving branches as part of a beaver dam analog project. Photo courtesy the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation.



1A TRIBAL ENGAGEMENT AND RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING

- 1A.1 In line with agency-wide actions to review government-to-government protocols and guidelines, we will gain a better understanding of the appropriate protocols for engaging with tribal nations for division-level projects
- 1A.2 Work with Washington's tribal nations to update traditional territory maps and contact listings for timber, forestry, and natural resources staff to support better coordination, information sharing, and relationship-building

1B IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES TO INCREASE STATE AND TRIBAL PARTNERSHIPS AND INCREASE INDIGENOUS VOICES, MANAGEMENT, AND STEWARDSHIP IN NATURAL RESOURCES

- 1B.1 Work to develop master agreement documents with interested tribes to better streamline workflows and processes
- 1B.2 Encourage and facilitate tribal collaboration, co-management, co-planning, and support for inclusion in forest health and resilience work, especially when tribal representatives are not present in management, planning, or stewardship meetings
- 1B.3 Connect tribal staff with appropriate DNR staff and partners to facilitate communications on the importance of and issues surrounding compliance with Revised Codes of Washington (RCWs) and Washington Administrative Codes (WACs) related to cultural resources reviews and monitoring for projects on state lands
- 1B.4 Partner with tribes on Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) related opportunities. Identify and share proposed and executed legislative language revisions that provide additional opportunities for tribal nation-led management, stewardship, and restoration activities on federal lands
- 1B.5 Identify and actively seek out opportunities for collaboration and engagement with tribal nations, especially in priority landscapes
- 1B.6 Strive to invest 50 percent of All-Lands Direct Investment funds on forest health work on tribal lands, tribally-led, or tribally-supported projects in ceded and traditional territories, primarily in priority landscapes
- 1B.7 Include content around tribal stewardship and tribal management in Forest Resilience Division's annual reports (such as the Forest Health Report, Work of Wildfire Report, and others)



1C	INDIGENOUS RELATIONS AND CULTURAL BURNING
1C.1	Work to expand prescribed fire and cultural burning partnerships and agreements with tribes and tribal nations across Washington
1C.2	Work with tribal nations to better understand cultural burning practices; bring these cultural burning practices more readily into burn plans (such as burning protocols that emphasize culturally-important plants that are propagated through prescribed fire).
1C.3	Work regionally with tribal nations to develop plans for prescribed fire
1C.4	Continue to learn about the wide array of traditional cultural burning practices and how they related to resource stewardship, first foods, and spiritual values

Examples of this work:

- The Forest Resilience Prescribed Fire Program is working with the Yakama and Kalispel nations, as well as the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation and the Federal Bureau of Indian Affairs' Fuels Management Program to develop a strategic action plan for prescribed fire in Eastern Washington.
- Yakama Nation is partnering with the USFS on the NEPA process for project development and implementation in the Tieton Priority Landscape. Tieton, identified as a priority landscape in the 2020 landscape evaluation process tied to the 20-Year Forest Health Strategic Plan, is within the traditional territory of the Yakama people.
- The Inchelium Priority Landscape was identified and co-developed by the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation and Forest Resilience staff.
- Forest Resilience staff worked with the Kalispel Tribe to support the implementation of a forest health treatment on the Kalispel's Indian Creek Community Forest. The forest will be used for tribal youth education and engagement.
- Located in Southeast Washington, the Rainwater Wildlife Management Area is owned and managed by the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation. Forest Resilience All-Lands Direct Investments are funding implementation of a forest restoration project on the South Touchet River.

GOAL 2: Develop, Strengthen and Expand Partnerships and Resources for Groups and Demographics Historically Underserved by our Programs

As a statewide government agency, we are civil servants to the forest health needs of the people of Washington. This goal acknowledges the need to dedicate time and resources to developing relationships and partnerships with the many communities and individuals whose forest health concerns have historically been underserved by our programs, notably those members of rural forested communities, as well as urban forest health concerns in communities experiencing environmental injustices. The actions below were chosen to improve outreach, develop sustainable relationships, and more equitably offer resources to individuals, communities, and groups often left out of forest health discussions and opportunities.



Photo by Robert Schrader.

2A	OPPORTUNITY IDENTIFICATION
2A.1	Prioritize four priority landscape watersheds each biennium in which to meet with community members, forest workers, forest collaboratives and partners to determine forest health goals with an equity lens. Work with the community to share these goals and challenges with a broader audience. Connect community leaders with appropriate partners.
2A.2	Identify research topics, applications, and engagement opportunities with vulnerable or overburdened communities (discussion of Resist-Accept-Direct framework , trailing edge forests)
2A.3	Partner with the USFS on environmental justice goals. Identify processes for establishing environmental justice-focused projects within the GNA framework, and in line with the federal Wildfire Crisis Strategy and 20-Year Forest Health Strategic Plan: Eastern Washington)
2A.4	Identify opportunities to partner with counties on GNA-related work in alignment with 2023 Farm Bill revisions
2A.5	Identify current limitations and opportunities to sign larger contracts and agreements for resource exchange in prescribed fire operations among partners
2A.6	Help identify priority landscapes to address specific inequities identified in the 2023 Washington Prescribed Fire Barriers Assessment Report and Strategic Action Plan, specifically those related to burn permits and the Burn Portal . Allocate time and resources to identify potential solutions and opportunities related to burn permits that are more user-friendly for historically underserved communities and individuals
2A.7	Expand awareness of Urban and Community Forest Program services, community grants, and opportunities for engagement in underserved communities. Better understand cultural protocols to engage with underrepresented groups on urban and community forestry topics



North Central Washington Forest Health Collaborative members gather and discuss forest health issues. Photo courtesy the Cascadia Conservation District.



2B	COMMUNITY SUPPORT
2B.1	Prioritize funds to communities and areas with higher scores as outlined on the Washington Environmental Health Disparities Map. Use more geographically localized datasets (such as school districts) to more appropriately prioritize these funds in rural areas
2B.2	Identify and explore legal and contractual needs to develop community use agreements for prescribed fire equipment and resources, especially in rural forested communities, for groups like fire districts and prescribed burn associations
2B.3	Identify potential options for adjustments for contractors and partners who reside within the high-ranking areas of the Environmental Health Disparities Map for different funding opportunities managed by the Forest Resilience Division
2B.4	Assess current methods of communication with contractors and partners regarding current funding, project capacity, and partnership resources

2C	COMMUNITY COLLABORATION AND CROSS-POLLINATION
2C.1	Share key results and information that is accessible to community leaders, especially in rural forested areas, of our annual/biannual reports, such as the Forest Health Highlights Report, Work of Wildfire, and Forest Health Assessment and Treatment Framework
2C.2	Facilitate Forest Resilience Division and partner knowledge and resource sharing for cross-boundary restoration work across state borders to help develop opportunities for cross-pollination of workforce development, including skillsets, experience, and protocols, such as workshops and learning exchanges
2C.3	Work with prescribed burn associations and conservation districts to identify potential locations for mobile prescribed fire trailers to be stationed; expand associated outreach efforts to a wider breadth of communities
2C.4	Partner with WSU Extension and Firelands WA to support safety and workers' rights training for Latinx forest workers. Support and communicate with existing efforts of partners (including WSU Extension, Firelands WA, University of Oregon, and Oregon State University)

Examples of this work:

- Forest Resilience Federal Lands Program recently worked with Skamania County to develop a shared forestry position. Due to its substantial acreage of federal lands, Skamania County has a very small taxable land base, which substantially limits Skamania's revenue streams. This position provides additional resources for the county, both economically and from a technical standpoint.
- A 2021-2022 USDA Landscape Scale Restoration Grant in the San Juan Islands is funding a partnership with the Island Conservation Corps (ICC). ICC is a youth conservation corps whose membership is made up of young adults who are Indigenous and/or full-time residents of the San Juan Islands, where full-time employment opportunities are difficult to find. Many individuals who are part of the ICC are also part of a natural resources academic program run jointly by Northwest Indian College and Western Washington University in natural resources.



Members of the 2022-2023 Island Conservation Corps team pose in one of their project sites. Photo by Ashley Blazina-Cooper.

GOAL 3: Make Forest Resilience Communication Materials More Accessible to a Wider Number of Washingtonians

More than 150 different languages are spoken in Washington. In 27 out of our 39 counties, at least five percent of the population speaks a language other than English at home. In order to effectively offer our services, expertise, and partnership, we need to be able to effectively communicate what forest resilience is to the people of Washington, regardless of the individual's native language, or visual or physical differences. This requires us to look at different materials and resources for colorblind-friendly palettes, accessible text, and direct translations, yet also includes examining the cultural relevancy of our materials – making sure the tone, format, graphics and images resonate with the intended audiences.

3A	PRINT TRANSLATION
3A.1	Translate key pieces of program-specific solicitation documents, competitive funding opportunities and contract paperwork into Spanish. Identify additional language needs for funding-related documents
3A.2	Develop plan to translate all key pieces of program and section-specific print and electronic materials

3B	INTERPRETATION/LIVE COMMUNICATION
3B.1	Identify funding needs and current capacity for interpretation at public-facing meetings
3B.2	Provide the 31-language iSpeak cards at in-person, public-facing events that our division hosts. Document translation and interpretation needs and opportunities at community levels
3B.3	Identify funding needs and current capacity for interpretation at public-facing meetings

3C

ACCESSIBILITY

3C.1

Determine current accessibility of priority division documents that are available for download. Work to improve accessibility of documents for individuals who have visual or mobility impairments

3C.2

Identify different pathways and processes for making documents more accessible and relevant from lingual, cultural, and visual perspectives

3C.3

Identify easily accessible options for translation that can be tapped into as additional language needs are identified across programs. Potentially expand current list of translation and interpretation service options available to DNR employees

3C.4

Provide closed captioning for virtual webinars, presentations, and larger meetings and events where Forest Resilience is the lead organizer or host

Examples of this work:

- Raul Martinez, DNR's External Affairs Manager for Community and Forest Resilience, offers Spanish interpretation services for division webinars, community meetings and individual homeowner visits. Raul provided Spanish interpretation for the second event in our "What Makes a Just Forest?" Speaker Series, focused around Latinx/e Forest Workers Rights, Working Conditions, and Health
- Forest Resilience worked with contractor AvantPage to translate 16 key documents into Spanish, including information on wildlife habitat, fire-resistant plants, our small forest landowner cost-share program, and our 20-Year Forest Health Strategic Plan: Eastern Washington. These documents were also all altered to include accessible text for readers who have visual or mobility impairments.



Pages from a few of the Forest Resilience Division documents translated into Spanish.

GOAL 4: More Equitably Partner With and Support Communities in Forest Resilience Planning and Implementation Efforts

With additional support, many current and potential forest health partners have the expertise, awareness, and localized knowledge to effectively plan or implement projects. This goal acknowledges the deep localized knowledge that communities and individuals have about a given landscape, and should be incorporated into larger planning, management, and stewardship around forest resilience. The items that follow aim to better provide the types of planning and implementation support to local and community-led efforts to sustainably thrive.

4A	IMPLEMENTATION AND PROJECT PLANNING
4A.1	Identify opportunities to do fire effects monitoring through the forest science team to more readily work on wildfires across all land ownerships to holistically assess and improve equitable outcomes, particularly for historically underserved communities, in future restoration and outreach efforts
4A.2	Help fire districts and other community partners, particularly those in historically underserved communities, with planning prescribed fires
4B	IMPLEMENTATION TRAINING/EDUCATION
4B.1	Provide program education and resources for communities (particularly those already facing environmental and social disparities) to be more prepared and proactive for events that could inequitably impact them, such as invasive species outbreaks and large storm events
4B.2	Lead a workshop or training to educate stakeholders, partners, and project managers around best practices for developing contracts and scopes of work, focusing on stakeholders and groups who have historically been underrepresented in outreach efforts

4C IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

- 4C.1 Familiarize potential partners with current and future opportunities for partners to become knowledgeable and comfortable with fire to increase capacity of localized prescribed fire and cultural burning
- 4C.2 Help already-coordinated groups develop more holistic implementation efforts like Prescribed Burn Associations, Learn To Burn Workshops, and other activities. Coordinate these efforts with work already underway with partners (such as conservation districts, TNC, WRCD)
- 4C.3 Provide capacity building opportunities for highly impacted communities to utilize urban and community forestry program activities
- 4C.4 Help support low-income and disadvantaged communities to expand tree canopy cover and increase tree equity statewide

Examples of this work:

- The Forest Resilience Division began offering its Certified Burn Manager course in spring 2022. The course is conducted through a mix of classroom instruction and hands-on field activities, and educates course-takers on regulations and laws that dictate burning, burn permits, and a number of other topics. The goal of the course is to train and certify citizens in how to plan and implement a safe prescribed burn in their community.
- In 2023, the Urban and Community Forestry Program launched the Washington Tree Equity Collaborative. Utilizing data from American Forests' Tree Equity Score tool, the three-year program will work to improve tree canopy in socioeconomically disadvantaged neighborhoods, as well as more inclusively support current and fledgling urban forestry programs across the state.
- The Urban and Community Forestry Program currently runs the Washington Community Forestry Assistance Grant Program. For the past four years, approximately half of all grant dollars have gone toward communities with high environmental health disparities. Past projects have included activities such as restoring public parks and increasing urban tree cover.



Community member picks fruit in the newly-restored historic orchard in McAuliffe Park in Kirkland. The restoration work was funded through the Washington Community Forestry Assistance Grant Program. Photo courtesy City of Kirkland and City Fruit.

GOAL 5: Review and Identify Opportunities to Improve Internal Policies, Contracting, Education, and Training Requirements to Better Prioritize Equitable Implementation Practices

Threading environmental justice into all the work the Forest Resilience Division does will take time. Internally, we acknowledge this process starts by formally dedicating time and resources to reviewing and revising our current work practices, policies, and requirements. We also know that we have a lot to learn, and will continue to learn, throughout this process. We commit to being long-term learners by prioritizing individual and program training, education, and workshops around environmental justice and related topics.

5A	PROGRAM AND SECTION EQUITY ASSESSMENTS
5A.1	Develop an equity and environmental justice working group to determine metrics, assessments, and tools that can be used for technical and financial assistance for wildfire resilience and forest health projects (known as the financial assistance program), and set equity-related funding targets
5A.2	Conduct program analyses of monitoring metrics to determine which are most helpful in supporting equity and environmental justice goals
5A.2	Train division staff on how to appropriately use and apply datasets aimed at identifying environmental injustices and equities

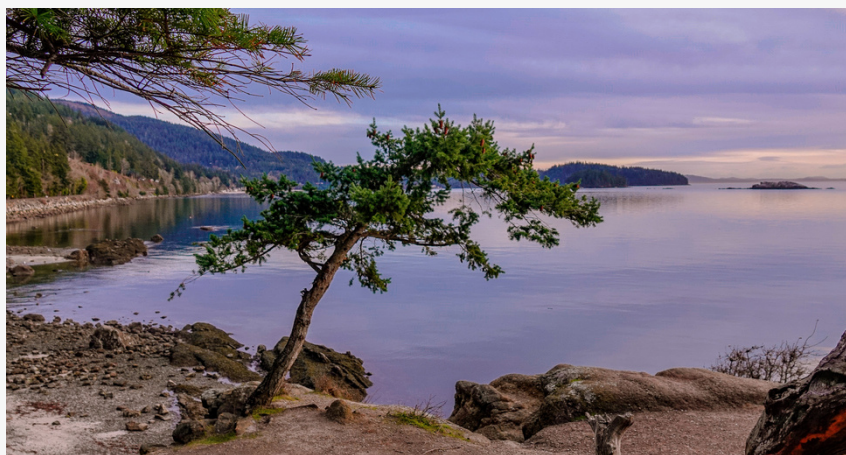


Photo by Pavl Polo.



5B GRANTS AND CONTRACTS

- 5B.1 Use DNR's agency-wide equity assessment framework (to be finalized in July 2023) to assess equity of Forest Resilience Division's grant programs
- 5B.2 Explore opportunities for wider reach and accessibility of Forest Resilience grant and funding opportunities, including language accessibility
- 5B.3 Assess the current equity challenges for disadvantaged and community-level vendors with existing contracts and procurements processes. Explore options and recommendations for improvements (such as increased grant opportunities) through an equity lens.
- 5B.4 Examine and identify different potential processes for exemptions for requests for proposals (RFPs) and other competitive solicitations when working with nonprofits and other similar entities

5C WORKPLACE CULTURE

- 5C.1 Identify current and potential opportunities for the division to support apprenticeships with community and technical colleges, tribal colleges, and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)
- 5C.2 Seek out diverse applicant pools for Forest Resilience Division jobs. Provide necessary support to people from under-represented backgrounds that we do hire

5D EMPLOYEE TRAINING AND EDUCATION

- 5D.1 Invest internal capacity into becoming familiar with traditional territories for each tribal nation across Washington
- 5D.2 Take trainings and courses on how to be more culturally aware in Indigenous spaces and in Indigenous relations, as well as training and education on all groups experiencing environmental justice issues.
- 5D.3 Direct staff members to take at least one equity and/or environmental justice training per year
- 5D.4 Build an online and hard-copy environmental justice resource library, where Forest Resilience Division staff can check out and reference a variety of written materials from experts on topics and sub-topics related to environmental justice and forest resilience.

Examples of this work:

- Worked with subject matter experts to create the “What Makes a Just Forest?” Speakers Series, which delved into the building blocks of environmental justice in Washington’s forests.
- Did preliminary assessments of overlap between metrics outlined in the Washington Health Disparities Map and our priority landscapes to identify top environmental justice focus areas. Initial results demonstrated need for additional data types and sources.





REFERENCES AND CITATIONS

Bernstein, S. "Labor unions help beyond their membership. Cesar Chavez proved it." The Washington Post, 30 January 2023. Online.

<<https://www.washingtonpost.com/made-by-history/2023/01/30/history-3m-cesar-chavez-pesticides-unions/>>

Buckley, C. "At 75, the Father of Environmental Justice Meets the Moment." The New York Times, 20 November 2022. Online.

<<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/12/climate/robert-bullard-environmental-justice.html>>

Dougherty, P. "Boldt Decision: United States v. State of Washington." HistoryLink, 24 August 2020. Online. <<https://www.historylink.org/file/2108>>

Environmental Protection Agency. "Summary of Executive Order 12898 - Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations: 59 FR 7629; February 16, 1994." 12 September 2022.

<<https://www.epa.gov/laws-regulations/summary-executive-order-12898-federal-actions-address-environmental-justice>>

Healthy Environments for All Act. Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 5141, Chapter 314. 25 July 2021. 67th Legislature.

Moore-Nall, A. "The Legacy of Uranium Development on or Near Indian Reservations and Health Implications Rekindling Public Awareness." Medical Geology: Impacts of the Natural Environment on Public Health. 2015, 5(1), 15-29; <https://doi.org/10.3390/geosciences5010015>

Nisqually Indian Tribe "Opposition to the Changes to the Part 151 process (25 CFR §151)." Comment Letter to Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Tashuda. Department of the Interior. 2 July 2018.

<<https://www.bia.gov/sites/default/files/dup/assets/as-ia/raca/pdf/57%20-%20Nisqually%20Indian%20Tribe.pdf>>.

Statista. "Leading metropolitan areas with the highest percentage of American Indian or Alaska Native population in the US in 2019." 2023.

<<https://www.statista.com/statistics/432678/us-metropolitan-areas-with-the-highest-percentage-of-american-native-population/>>.

U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. "What is Environmental Justice?" Not in My Backyard: Executive Order 12,898 and Title VI as Tools for Achieving Environmental Justice." US Commission on Civil Rights, 2003, 194 pp.

<<https://www.usccr.gov/files/pubs/envjust/ej0104.pdf>>.

Waxman, O.B. "The History of Native American Boarding Schools is Even More Complicated than a New Report Reveals." Time Magazine. 17 May 2022.

<<https://time.com/6177069/american-indian-boarding-schools-history/>>.

Please note that photo and graphic credits are found directly next to, above, or below the image or graphic. Additional images without photo credits are either courtesy DNR or are stock photos.

